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A link road in Motijheel area leased out. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

Road leased out in Motijheel!

A group of people has occupied a public road connecting two thoroughfares in Motijheel area in the city, claiming that the road was leased out to them for one year by the Land Reforms Board under the Ministry of Land. The occupiers have already built structures and opened restaurants totally blocking the road, behind Sonali Bank. The road was recently rebuilt by the Dhaka City Corporation at a cost of Tk 15 lakh. The occupiers, people there said — one Belal Hossain and an employee of Janata Bank, Selim — have asked other makeshift roadside shops to vacate the area immediately or face eviction. They have also put up three signboards at the site. One board reads, 'The land was under the custody of the Court of Wards,' another said 'it was the office of the Bangladesh Sramik League and the other claimed it to be the office of Awami Juba League's Motijheel unit under Ward-32. More than 15 restaurants were seen doing brisk business while six poorly dressed private security guards sat down to watching construction of more shops.

"We have been doing business on the footpath here for the last 20 years, these people have just come in and occupied the whole road and brought in a few hundred masts to erect us," said Abdul Bari, a footpath restaurant owner at the site. Another shopkeeper nearby warned of 'bloody consequences' if they were evicted. Office executives nearby expressed their surprise how a public road could be leased out for shops while the whole of Motijheel area was so congested due to lack of required roads. Some feared that a clash could break out between the occupiers and the others on the issue. Officials of the Land Reforms Board in Motijheel confirmed that the site measuring 13 kathas was leased out to one Belal Hossain for one year for Tk 85,000. "The land belongs to Nawab Sir Salimullah and we are the custodian of the Nawab's lands

under the Court of Wards Act 1879," Deputy Land Reforms Commissioner Habib Ullah said, showing photocopies of documents. When asked whether they were aware that the site had always been a full-fledged road, the Chairman of the Land Reforms Board replied that it was not the business of his office. "There are many famous buildings in the city which were built on our lands, we will take steps to recover those," he said. The Chairman mentioned Dhaka Club as one such building and said his office was filing a writ petition against the Club to recover the land. Asked whether they had sought the opinion of the DCC, another official replied, "They should have come to us before constructing the road, why should we go to them? We floated several tenders in the national newspapers before giving the lease."

Khaleda: Mid-term polls

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to be the centre of all activities. But the ruling party is not allowing his party to speak in the Jatiya Sangsad and is doing everything bypassing the parliament. Asked about press reports that she met the self-confessed killers of Bangabandhu during her Pakistan visit, the former prime minister said, "It's a blatant lie. Nothing happened like this. All these are manufactured and were spread with motives."

India Abroad News Service adds: Begum Khaleda Zia said India cannot 'abdicate its responsibility' for signing a lopsided agreement on sharing Ganges water which, she claimed, had jeopardised her country's interests. "As much as I hold the present Awami League government responsible for signing the agreement, as a neighbour India cannot abdicate its responsibility either."

"I consider this (sharing of water) to be a human rights issue," said the BNP chairperson. The BNP chairperson, who lost power to the Awami League of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the 1996 general election, said her government had always made sincere efforts to resolve what she called the vexed Farakka Water issue. "But we could not achieve much progress because we were not prepared to accept an agreement with India on water sharing at the cost of Bangladesh," she claimed. "But the present government has done that — signed an agreement which is detrimental to the interests of Bangladesh," Begum Zia alleged. The BNP leader said that al-

though under the agreement, Bangladesh was supposed to get 35,500 cusecs of water, it is actually getting much less. "In the dry season we never got it and recently the Minister for Environment was compelled to acknowledge that the agreement is not being implemented," she said. "In fact, we were getting more water before the signing of the agreement. Actually the agreement was in favour of India," she alleged. In response to a question about her party's opposition to the granting of transit facility to India through Bangladesh territory, Begum Zia said BNP was not opposed to transit as such. "But under the name of transit, the Awami League government wants to make it into a corridor for India," she said. She claimed that because of the problems of terrorism in the northeastern parts of India and the need for more military movement in the vicinity, New Delhi wants to use Bangladesh to resolve the problem by gaining easier access to the region through the latter's territory. "But this is dangerous for the sovereignty of Bangladesh," she warned.

Asked to comment on her party's reported alliance with Islamic fundamentalists, she said, "For the larger interests of the country, people and parties may come together. This has happened in the past and this will happen in future."

Ershad holds meeting with party MPs

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party chief HM Ershad held a meeting yesterday with party MPs and discussed his decision of asking party Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju to quit his cabinet post, according to meeting sources.

The sources also alleged that Manju, who is Communication Minister, was trying to form his own group. When contacted, Manju denied the allegation saying, "I am a loyalist." JP leader Advocate Fazle Rabbi, talking to The Daily Star, said that the meeting held at the Baridhara office of the party was attended by 17 out of 32 MPs of the party.

IU classes resume today

IU Correspondent

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, (Kushtia), Sept 6: Classes of the Islamic University resume tomorrow after 71 days of closure.

The classes were not held since June 29 due to the indefinite strike called by the Bangladesh Chhatra League demanding removal of Professor Inam-ul-Haque, then vice-chancellor of the university. The new VC took over on Wednesday.

President, PM pay homage to Mother Teresa

President Shahabuddin Ahmed yesterday expressed deep shock at the sad demise of Mother Teresa, reports UNB. In a condolence message, the President said the octogenarian Mother dedicated her life to the service of the 'poorest of the poor' at the divine call in 1946. President observed that her life-long service to the people will be a source of inspiration of 'love and care' to many underprivileged people world over. He paid his sincere tribute to the late Mother Teresa and prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also expressed her profound shock at the death of Mother Teresa. In a message yesterday, the Prime Minister said an era of rendering unblemished service to the distressed humanity came to an end with the death of Mother Teresa. The Prime Minister, now on a state visit to Indonesia, prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul of Mother Teresa and said: My nation joins me in expressing homage and tributes to the Mother.

Khaleda Zia, BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday paid rich tributes to the memory of Mother Teresa and said that she would be remembered across the world for her service to the distressed humanity.

Stampede

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only staircase in the building to get out, said AK Azad, production manager of Nouvelle Garments Ltd. Md Ekram Hossain, a security guard of Modern Garments, told this correspondent that six to seven hundred workers were on duty in three factories when the incident took place. Many got injured as panicky workers started rushing down the five-foot wide staircase. Many workers including women, managed to escape by breaking open the grill of a window and unrolling bales of fabrics. There was no fire exit. Garments officials admitted that they did not train workers to escape during an emergency. The bodies were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue. Seven units of fire brigade took about half an hour to put out the fire. Traffic movement came to a halt for five hours in the busy Tongi Diversion Road and all outgoing inter-city passenger buses were stuck up inside the Mohakhali bus terminal due to violence. Police and sources in the garment factories said, the mob, in suspicion of huge casualties in the incident, pelted stones on running vehicles. Police brought the situation under control by resorting to lathi charge and lobbing tear gas shells. A large number of policemen were guarding the factory building and the Metropolitan Hospital till last night.

Hundreds weep

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phantoms from across India swarmed the road to the building where her body lay. Some carried flowers and few spoke. In Calcutta, the national flag was flying at half-mast. The town hall, which normally is open on Saturdays, declared a holiday, said Municipal Corporation chief Asim Burman. In the federal capital, New Delhi, the government announced that the national flag would be lowered to half-mast for two days. A mass held a mass at midday Saturday at the headquarters of the Missionaries of Charity, the order Mother Teresa created. "Today Mother Teresa is enjoying the presence of Jesus whom she loves and to whom she dedicated her work. We should all be rejoicing today for we have got a great intercessor in heaven," said Father Sebastian, the Priest who led the prayers. In the dimly-lit room, sparse, barring a huge, lifelike cross, the nun's body lay with her bare feet pointing to the altar. A table fan placed at her head rippled the cellophane on a bouquet of yellow roses and wreaths of white tube roses filled the humid room. More than 200 nuns knelt in prayer, singing 'Hallelujah' in chorus. One made the sign of a cross on the forehead of the body after the mass. Some of the songs, such as 'I am the bread of life' and other hymns of resurrection were among Mother Teresa's favourite, said a nun, speaking on condition of anonymity.

dent Jacques Chirac of France. She leaves us a strong message which has no borders and which goes beyond faith; helping, listening, solidarity." Pope John Paul II, rising early, celebrated a private Mass today for Mother Teresa and told the late nun's successor that he was confident her kind of selfless work for the world's poorest would continue. John Paul conducted the Mass at his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, where the pontiff has been resting since he returned from four gruelling days in Paris last month. Muslim religious leaders and scholars in Kashmir said today that Mother Teresa's death had deprived the world of a great source of inspiration. "They said the Roman Catholic missionary's death was a great loss to followers of all religions. The Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM) said service to mankind is the best worship of all, and she was doing what the Prophet (SM) had preached," Mohammod Maqbool Shah, an Islamic scholar, told Reuters in Srinagar. "A Christian lady (Mother Teresa) was doing what the Prophet (SM) of Islam advised Muslims to do. I think nobody can replace the Mother," said Mufti Mohammad Bashir-ud-Din, the Mufti Azam or head religious Muslim jurist of Jammu and Kashmir. Despite rains, hundreds of people, Hindu residents of Calcutta, sisters from hospices and homes for the infirm and or-

US Open

Davenport and Novotna upset their rivals

From Tawfiq Aziz Khan NEW YORK, Sept 6: Jana Novotna and Lindsay Davenport, the number 3 seeds in the women's doubles, this morning upset the applicant of Gigi Fernandez and Natasha Zvereva, seeded number one and decidedly the best women's doubles team in straight sets of 6-3, 6-4 in the final at the Arthur Ashe Stadium and were richer by \$ 300,000 dollars. This victory meant much for Novotna and Davenport. The latter ousted Novotna in the quarterfinals and then herself crashed out in the semifinals against the number one seed Martina Hingis. In 15 minutes the first semifinal of men's singles will start at the Ashe Stadium. Big serving Briton Greg Rusedski and the rugged Swede Jonas Bjorkman will play it out for a place in the final. Later in the afternoon Michael Chang, the number two seed American will face the remodelled Australian Patrick Rafter, seeded 13. Both men's and women's finals are billed for Sunday at the Ashe Stadium.

Hunger strike in front of Rajshahi Board today

From Our Correspondent RAJSHAHI, Sept 6: Bangladesh Chhatra Mottree, Rajshahi City Unit, has called a dawn-to-dusk token hunger strike tomorrow in front of the Rajshahi Education Board to protest the cancellation of examinations of some 18000 HSC examinees of 1997.

Elephants kill 4 in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 6: Four people were trampled to death by elephants in different parts of the district yesterday, reports BSS. According to district police, four people were killed by elephants at Raajan, Boalkhali and Mirsarai thanas in separate incidents. The victims were identified as Sonna Mia and Yunus.

AL calls hartal at Bhairab Bazar today

KISHOREGANJ, Sept 6: Awami League and BCL called a dawn-to-dusk hartal at Bhairab Bazar tomorrow demanding arrest and trial of the killers of BCL worker Aminul Huq Bakul, reports UNB. The Bhairab thana unit of AL and BCL brought out a joint procession at the thana head-quarters this evening.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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Mummy — Single word, poignant message

LONDON, Sept 6: The smallest wreath on Princess Diana's coffin was of white roses with a note bearing the single word 'mummy' — a poignant message that, amid the national grief, her two young sons are most bereft of all, reports Reuter.

Prince William and Prince Harry were the greatest joy of Diana's life. Their unfeigned anguish at her loss came out in bitter tears at her funeral.

When Elton John sang of their dead mother as a 'candle in the wind', the Princess finally cast off the royal reserve they had hung onto with such determination in the long walk behind her coffin to Westminster Abbey. Twelve-year-old Harry crumpled into shaking sobs, his head buried in his hand. Beside him Britain's future King William kept his head bowed, covering his face with his hand and wiping away tears.



A message where is written "Mummy" stands on the coffin of Diana, Princess of Wales, at Westminster Abbey in London yesterday. — AFP/UNB photo

Diana's coffin passes Dodi's house

LONDON, Sept 6: The hearse carrying the body of Diana, Princess of Wales, bedecked with flowers tossed from adoring crowds, today passed below the London home of Dodi al-Fayed, her companion also killed in the Paris car crash, reports AFP.

Bright sunshine illuminated three bouquets of white flowers on top of the coffin as the hearse passed in front of Dodi's apartment on the exclusive Park Lane, which flanks the eastern edge of Hyde Park. Dodi, 42, was laid to rest at a cemetery southwest of London after a Muslim ceremony at the central London Mosque, the night of the fatal car crash last Sunday.

First time in history

LONDON, Sept 6: The Union Jack flew at half-staff over Buckingham Palace today for the first time in history, as a mark of respect for Princess Diana, reports AP. The red-and-gold Royal Standard normally is flown at the palace, but only when the queen is in residence. Otherwise, the flagpole is bare. But the standard came down when the queen left the palace for today's funeral at Westminster Abbey, replaced by the Union Jack. "The half-masting of the union flag is at the queen's request," a palace spokesman said. "It will be flying all day until midnight."

The standard, symbolic of the continuity of the monarchy, is never flown at half-staff, even for the death of the sovereign. It also was draped over Diana's coffin, because she was a member of the royal family.

Funeral of the century

PARIS, Sept 6: Joining the world's farewell, French newspapers eulogized Diana today, six days after her death in the twisted wreck of a car that crashed in a Paris tunnel, reports AP. "It will be... without a doubt the funeral of the century," wrote Le Figaro. "Whether it's the people crowded into London — there are estimates of three million fans — whether it's the others watching television — two and a half billion of the curious — whether it's the countries directly retransmitting the British broadcasts — 187 are expected to do so — all that is witness to a staggering phenomenon."

The End trumpeted the France Soir tabloid, in a front-page headline, over a huge photograph of a young man wrapped in the Union Jack as he overnighted along the funeral route in London. "Inside, in an editorial entitled 'The myth and the reality,' the paper listed some of the attributes that gave the Princess of Wales such star quality: 'The beauty, the celebrity status, a past with a cuckold husband... a present as a liberated woman... her crusades of charity in support of those worse off... her resistance to the unrelenting burdens of a royal family stuck in the mold of its ancestors.'"

Hasina

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From Bandung Hasina flew to the sea resort Denpasar, Bali. At the Ngurah Rai International Airport, she was received by the Governor of Bali, Ida Bagus Oka and the Regional Commander of Udayana Major General Syahrir. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr SA Samad and other members of the entourage accompanied the Prime Minister.

Goodbye, Diana

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with the front bouquet said, "Mummy". Scotland Yard estimated that one million people lined the route to the abbey, and large crowds also gathered in Regent's Park and Hyde Park where giant television screens broadcast the solemnities. William and Harry were solemn but poised as they entered the abbey precisely at 11 am (1000 GMT) with their father, Prince Charles, their grandfather Prince Philip and Diana's brother.

The controlled sorrow of the aristocracy — the 'stiff upper lip' that provoked so much hostile comment against the royal family during the week — was very much in evidence at abbey. It was there in the readings by Diana's sisters, Lady Sarah McCorquodale and Lady Jane Fellowes; in Prime Minister Tony Blair's reading of St. Paul's affirmation that 'the greatest of these is love,' even in Elton John's performance of 'Goodbye England's rose,' the song he reworked for the occasion.

The abbey's massive pipe organ led the assembled mourners in the national anthem, then the abbey choir sang the traditional funeral sentences — "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord" — as the coffin was carried to the high altar. As the procession had passed Buckingham Palace minutes earlier, Queen Elizabeth II, her sister Princess Margaret and the rest of the Royal Family gathered at the gate of Buckingham Palace to see the coffin pass. The young princess joined the procession at St. James's Palace, and were followed by representatives of 110 charities associated with Diana. Some of those were in wheelchairs, some in nurses' white dresses and the uniforms of other caring professions.

As the day broke, cool and dry, central London was jammed along the 3.5-mile procession route. Some stood all night to claim prime places outside palaces and the abbey. Police forecast crowds of well over a million — and perhaps up to 5 million — outstripping the numbers who flocked to the capital for Diana's wedding to Charles in 1981. After the funeral, Diana was being buried on an island in the grounds of the Spencer family's stately home, Althorp Park, north of London. Supermarkets and museums closed today, many sporting events were cancelled, and even McDonald's restaurants shut down.

To the end, fame dogged Diana. Her burial place was separated from 20 generations of Spencers buried in the village church at Great Brington, near her ancestral home, for fear the hamlet would become overrun with sightseers and tourists.

Operations at DMCH

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The Director further added, "Some influential groups are supporting the unauthorised water connection from the DMCH. It is not possible to find an easy remedy to the problem right away. Although I am responsible to find a solution to the matter, but it needs time."

When asked why DMCH authorities took such a long time to communicate with the PWD, Col Munir said, "I had verbally asked PWD officials to come and inspect the pipeline. In response PWD officials told me they were preparing to find a solution to the problem." However, there was no inspection team from PWD till yesterday. A young man living in the slum, when asked said, "We have no problem in getting water here." Pointing to the unauthorised pipe connection, he said, "We get it through the pipe from the DMCH."

Inside the hospital, doctors are advising the patients requiring emergency operation to wait till water supply is restored. Ismail Hussain from Luxmipur waits for his turn to be operated upon. He is among many who is suffering from unbearable pains. Hussain is suffering from maxilla-cancer which grows with each passing day.

The situation here has turned chaotic. Outdoor patients are being referred to every day. There are too many waiting patients. The abnormal influx has turned the situation very serious," said Prof Abdullah. "Unless the authorities find an immediate solution to the problem, things will keep on worsening." He said there are 40 beds. Only one nurse, helped by two trainees, attend the patients

Diana's brother

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"I don't think she ever understood why her genuinely good intentions were sneered at by the media, why there appeared to be a permanent quest on their behalf, to bring her down. It is baffling," he said. Mourners in Westminster Abbey burst into spontaneous applause at the end of Spencer's pointed remarks and, outside, hundreds of thousands watching on giant TV screens cheered, too. Spencer's voice faltered toward the end of tribute to his 36-year-old sister, who was killed Sunday with her new millionaire boyfriend, Dodi Fayed, in a high-speed car crash, fleeing from pursuing photographers.

Spencer, who lives in Cape Town, South Africa, had immediately accused editors who bought intrusive pictures of his sister of 'having blood on their hands.' "She would want us today to pledge ourselves to protecting her beloved boys, William and Harry, from a similar fate — and I do this here, Diana, on your behalf," Spencer told the huge congregation, many of them moved to tears.